

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6241
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: JA, US, PFOR
SUBJECT: SONODA INTERVIEW ON US-JAPAN SUMMIT

MARCH 18 TOKYO SHIMBUN CARRIED EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH
CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA ON UPCOMING US-JAPAN
SUMMIT TALKS. FOLLOWING IS ROUGH TRANSLATION OF
INTERVIEW:

BEGIN ARTICLE:

HEADLINE: NUCLEAR-REPROCESSING IS MATTER OF VITAL
IMPORTANCE; "SPECIAL TREATMENT" EXPECTED; IN EXCHANGE
FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT PROPOSAL.

--WHAT ARE THE SIGNIFICANCE AND NATURE OF THE US-JAPAN
SUMMIT TALKS AT THIS TIME?

CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA: THE TALKS THIS
TIME WILL MARK THE 14TH ROUND SINCE THE FIRST ROUND OF
US-JAPAN SUMMIT TALKS BETWEEN FORMER PRIME MINISTER
KISHI AND FORMER PRESIDENT EISENHOWER. AT THE TIME OF
THE FIRST ROUND OF TALKS THE FORMER PRIME MINISTER
WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE PRIME MINISTER (TN: MEANING
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PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA) AS LDP CHIEF DEPUTY SECRETARY
GENERAL AND ALSO BY MYSELF AS ADVISOR TO THE PRIME
MINISTER. HOWEVER, THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT SURROUNDING
THE US AND JAPAN HAS FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGED, COMPARED
WITH WHAT IT WAS THAT AT TIME. IN JANUARY OF
THIS YEAR, THE PRIME MINISTER SUBMITTED A REQUEST TO
VICE-PRESIDENT MONDALE, SAYING, "I WANT YOU TO TELL THE

PRESIDENT NOT TO FORMALLY DECIDE ON HIS POLICY TOWARD ASIA AND ECONOMIC POLICIES, UNTIL MY VISIT TO THE US." THIS WAS WHAT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN IMAGINED FROM THE STATE OF US-JAPAN RELATIONS AT THE TIME OF THE FIRST ROUND OF SUMMIT TALKS. THE US SEEMS TO BE FACING THE FORTHCOMING TALKS, WITH A FEELING OF EXPECTATION TOWARD JAPAN, AND AT THE SAME TIME, WITH A FEELING OF EXPECTATION ON THE VIEWS OF PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA HIMSELF.

--WHAT MENTAL ATTITUDE WILL YOU TAKE TOWARD THE TALKS, AS THE SPOKESMAN?

CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA: FIRST OF ALL, I WILL APPEAL TO THE JAPANESE PEOPLE ON THE CONTENTS OF THE TALKS AND THE FACTS AS THEY ARE, AND IN AN EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND WAY. SECONDLY, I WILL ENDEAVOR TO HAVE PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA'S AND THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT'S WAYS OF THINKING UNDERSTOOD BY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. I CONSIDER THESE TWO POINTS TO BE MY ROLE.

--WHAT ABOUT THE DEGREE OF PRIORITY FOR THE SUBJECT MATTERS?

CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA: THE FIRST SUBJECT MATTER IS THE WORLD ECONOMY PROBLEM. THE US AND JAPAN WILL CONFIRM THAT THEY HAVE JOINT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SURMOUNTING THE WORLD DEPRESSION, AND DISCUSSIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED AS TO HOW THE TWO COUNTRIES SHOULD

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STEER THE COURSE. THE SECOND POINT IS THE ASIAN PROBLEM. WE WILL SEEK AN EXPLANATION ON THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARD ASIA, AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE UNEASINESS ON THE PART OF THE ASEAN MEMBER NATIONS WHICH FEAR THAT AMERICA'S INTEREST IN THESE COUNTRIES, BURMA, AND THE KOREAN PENINSULA MAY BE WEAKENING. THE THIRD POINT IS THE PROBLEM OF RESOURCES AND ENERGY. THIS PROBLEM WILL BE INTERTWINED WITH THE NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT PROBLEM.

WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SUCH DISCUSSIONS IS THE TALKS BETWEEN THE TWO TOP LEADERS ALONE, WHICH WILL BE HELD FOR ABOUT 30 MINUTES AT THE OUTSET OF THE FIRST ROUND OF TALKS TO BE HELD ON THE 21ST. AT THE TALKS, STRESS WILL BE LAID ON THE ANALYSIS OF THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATIONS IN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND THE PRIME MINISTER WILL PROBABLY GIVE A RATHER DRASTIC EXPLANATION. THE POLICY FOR COPING WITH THE "FACE-TO-FACE" TALKS HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED TO THE PRIME

MINISTER. PRESIDENT CARTER SEEMS TO BE A PERSON WHO WILL NOT BE BOUND BY ANY FRAMEWORK; THEREFORE, THERE IS ALSO THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE "FACE-TO-FACE" TALKS WILL BE HELD FOR MORE THAN 30 MINUTES.

--THE MATTER OF CONCERN FOR JAPAN IS THE PROBLEM OF WITHDRAWING US FORCES FROM THE ROK. THERE IS ALSO THE VIEW THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WILL PRESENT A CONCRETE PLAN FOR THE WITHDRAWAL THEREOF, WHAT ABOUT THIS?

CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA: I HAVE STILL NOT RECEIVED INFORMATION TO THE EFFECT THAT A CONCRETE PLAN WILL BE SUBMITTED. HOWEVER, JAPAN CANNOT REMAIN INDIFFERENT TOWARD THE BALANCE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. IT IS NATURAL FOR US TO EXPRESS OUR VIEW. IF THE US FORCES ARE TO BE WITHDRAWN. IT WILL BECOME NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH A FRAMEWORK TO REPLACE THE US
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FORCES FOR PEACE AND STABILITY ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS MUST REPEATEDLY BE MADE TO PREVENT MILITARY TENSION FROM ARISING ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA.

--WILL THE KOREAN PENINSULA PROBLEM BE INCLUDED IN THE US-JAPAN JOINT COMMUNIQUE? IF IT IS TO BE INCLUDED, WILL THE EXPRESSION CHANGE, COMPARED WITH THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE IN THE PAST?

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"KOREA," TOO, IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE

CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA: THERE IS A STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT THE KOREAN PENINSULA PROBLEM WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE AS PART OF THE ASIAN SITUATION. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID, IN HIS ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY SPEECH AT THE CURRENT DIET SESSION, THAT "THE SITUATION ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA HAS DEEP BEARING ON THE PEACE AND STABILITY OF EAST ASIA, INCLUDING OUR COUNTRY." I THINK THAT THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE WILL BE ALONG THAT LINE.

-- SOME PEOPLE FEEL THE UNITED STATES' APPROACH TOWARD THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA WAS (NORTH KOREA) IN THE BACKGROUND OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S PUTTING FORTH THE WITHDRAWAL OF US FORCES FROM THE ROK, BEFORE THE US-CHINA RAPPROCHMENT, THE US ALSO WITHDREW SURFACE-TO-AIR MACE B MISSILES, WHICH WERE THEN DEPLOYED IN OKINAWA.

CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA: THERE IS VARIOUS INFORMATION CONCERNING A US-KOREA RAPPROCHMENT. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS THE INFORMATION THAT THE US HAS UNCLASSIFIED

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DISPATCHED SOME PERSONS TO NORTH KOREA AT THE PRESENT TIME, BUT WE DO NOT THINK SO. RATHER, THE ACTUAL SITUATION SEEMS TO BE THAT NORTH KOREA IS SOUNDING OUT THE VIEWS OF THE US, BUT THAT THE US HAS NOT REPLIED TO IT.

-- HOW DO YOU REGARD THE MAIN AIM OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS DIPLOMACY BRINGING UP HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM IS CERTAIN

CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA: THE PRESIDENT HAS GREATER ENTHUSIASM FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM THAN WHAT WE HAD IMAGINED AT FIRST, AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE ALSO SUPPORTING THIS. IT WAS MENTIONED AT THE TIME VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE VISITED JAPAN, AND IT IS CERTAIN THAT THE US WILL BRING UP THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM AT THE SUMMIT TALKS.

-- IF THE US ADVOCATES THE INCORPORATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM IN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE, HOW WILL YOU COPE WITH IT. IS IT NOT THAT, IF

CONSIDERATION IS GIVEN TO RELATIONS WITH THE ROK AND
THE SOVIET UNION, JAPAN CANNOT BUT BECOME CAUTIOUS?

CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA: RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
IS THE BASIS OF DEMOCRACY, AND THE CONFIRMATION OF THAT
PRINCIPLE IS A MATTER OF COURSE. HOWEVER, IT IS
PROPER FOR ITS APPLICATION TO BE DIFFERENT BY EACH
NATION, ACCORDING TO THE SITUATION IN THAT COUNTRY.
ACCORDING TO MY PERSONAL OUTLOOK, I THINK THAT THIS
PROBLEM WILL BE INCORPORATED INTO THE JOINT
COMMUNIQUE IN SOME FORM OR OTHER.

-- THERE IS QUITE A BIG GAP BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE
US IN REGARD TO THE PROBLEM OF THE RE-PROCESSING OF
USED NUCLEAR FUEL. IS THERE SOME WAY OF BREAKING
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THIS IMPASSE?

CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA: THE QUESTION OF
WHETHER USED NUCLEAR FUEL CAN BE RE-PROCESSED WITHIN
JAPAN OR NOT IS A LIFE-OR-DEATH PROBLEM FOR JAPAN,
PARTLY INTERWINED WITH THE COST OF ATOMIC POWER
GENERATION. I AM THINKING WHETHER IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO
HAVE JAPAN BE GIVEN SPECIAL TREATMENT, AND ITS
ACCEPTING, IN EXCHANGE, SEVERE INSPECTIONS. HOWEVER,
ACCORDING TO ACTING AEC CHAIRMAN INOUE'S REPORT ON HIS
EARLIER VISIT TO THE US AND ACCORDING TO THE FOREIGN
MINISTRY'S INFORMATION, THE US ATTITUDE IS STIFF.

-- THE PRIME MINISTER WILL MAKE A CONCRETE PROPOSAL
ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT. DOES THIS HAVE SOME CONNECTION
WITH THE NUCLEAR FUEL PROBLEM? ALSO, ACCORDING TO A TIME
MAGAZINE REPORT, PRESIDENT CARTER IS EXPECTED TO PROPOSE
A 10-PERCENT CUT IN THE CONSUMPTION OF ENERGY AT
THE ADVANCED NATIONS SUMMIT CONFERENCE IN MAY. IN THAT
CASE, WILL IT NOT BECOME DIFFICULT TO ATTAIN A REAL
GROWTH RATE OF 6.7 PERCENT IN FISCAL 1977?

CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA: THERE IS A CONNECTION
BETWEEN THE NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT PROPOSAL AND THE NUCLEAR
FUEL PROBLEM. CONTRIBUTION TO NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT IS
A WAY TO OBTAIN US CO-OPERATION IN THE RE-PROCESSING
OF USED NUCLEAR FUEL. AS REGARDS THE ECONOMIZATION OF
ENERGY CONSUMPTION, THERE IS INFORMATION, TOO, THAT THE
US IS DISSATISFIED WITH THE WAY OF JAPAN'S
ECONOMIZATION. THE ECONOMIZATION OF ENERGY CONSUMPTION
IS THE OTHER SIDE OF OBTAINING AN ASSURANCE FOR THE
SUPPLY OF URANIUM. IT MAY BE THAT THE GOVERNMENT
MAY HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO CALL FOR ECONOMIZING ON

CONSUMPTION.

-- WILL AN INVITATION BE EXTENDED TO PRESIDENT
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CARTER TO VISIT JAPAN?

CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY SONODA: I THINK IT
PROBABLY WILL.
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